

The Sonoran Institute

Garfield – Kane County Partnership Action Plan

with participation from the Arizona Strip

**A report prepared for the U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of External Affairs
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Partners in Community Stewardship

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This action plan is the result of a workshop convened by the Sonoran Institute at the request of Jana Prewitt of the Department of Interior's Office of External Affairs. Community leaders from Coconino, Garfield, Kane, and Mohave Counties, and representatives of the state and federal agencies that operate in those counties, gathered at the Kanab Library on March 10 and 11, 1999 in Kanab, Utah. Their goal was to develop recommendations about how the Department of Interior and other agencies could help local communities build on existing efforts to better adapt to emerging economic realities and changing public lands policies.

Purpose

The workshop was intended to improve the ability of this remote rural region with a small population — but with scenic and recreational resources of national significance — to compete for state and federal assistance. The recommendations presented here are a locally-generated agenda of actions considered necessary for the region to be successful, but for which local resources are not sufficient. This agenda of actions provides a basis for the Department of Interior to help the communities mobilize the additional resources they need.

Process

The process of developing the recommendations presented began with a review of existing efforts. An activity designed to stimulate participants' imagination and help them think beyond traditional solutions followed that review. The first afternoon ended with a preliminary listing of action steps from small groups representing each major geographic area within the region.

Sonoran Institute staff prepared a synthesis of the preliminary action steps overnight, dividing them into five broad categories: local institutional, federal, educational, entrepreneurial, and physical. General discussion of this synthesis led to a final round of small group work, with groups being formed around four major action categories. The work groups produced a rough version of the six recommendations presented here, which were finalized by the Sonoran Institute, with assistance from local staff.

A Good Bet!

The Department of Interior's efforts to assist communities in Garfield and Kane Counties, and on the Arizona Strip, are not based simply on the fact that the region has been heavily impacted by federal land management decisions. Local people have already initiated an impressive array of responses to the changes in their lives. Garfield and Kane Counties and the area's small cities, including Fredonia, AZ, have been planning for the future with the assistance of regional and state agencies. Infrastructure needs have been identified and funding is being actively pursued. Regional marketing efforts are taking shape. Local people expect to work with the federal land management agencies as full partners, but some capacity-building remains to be done. Implementing the recommendations offered here will accomplish that. Interior's support for local initiatives reflects positive local actions and the expectation that investments in this region will produce abundant dividends in an improving local quality of life and the protection and restoration of public lands.

Recommended Actions

The workshop concluded that three major goals must be accomplished to ensure the long-term health of both local communities and the surrounding public lands, as well as visitor enjoyment of those lands:

- building local and agency capacity for partnerships,
- building local entrepreneurial capacity, and
- restoring landscape health through local efforts.

1. **Form and fund a four-county (Coconino, Garfield, Kane, and Mohave) partnership as a National Reinvention Laboratory.** The Lab would create a unique "one-stop" process of relating local needs both to public lands policy and state and federal assistance programs. It would operate under the broad guidance of the Western Governor's Association Enlibra principles, with an inclusive membership, a review process organized by the Escalante Center that serves as a model for building the "best science" into landscape management decisions, and the power, using existing authorities when possible, to:
 - a. fund landscape restoration work through local stewardship contracts, and
 - b. emphasize local contracting by having a local federal procurement office (see Recommended Action 3) and providing procurement education that helps local people learn how best to work with federal agencies.

The visibility and special latitude in procurement and personnel decisions that comes with National Reinvention Laboratory status is essential, as well as priority for funding from existing programs. The Lab will need to be able to coordinate existing programs that can be of assistance in the region and assist with local marketing efforts. It will also need the ability to link landscape restoration and health programs with the educational programs called for in Recommended Action 3. Local participation should not divert energy from existing efforts. Instead, it should be funded at a level that allows the communities to participate as full partners, but with the expectation that local involvement will eventually be locally funded.

The Enlibra Principles

*National Standards, Neighborhood Solutions
Collaboration, Not Polarization
Reward Results, Not Programs
Science for Facts, Process for Priorities
Markets Before Mandates
Change a Heart, Change a Nation
Recognition of Costs and Benefits
Solutions Transcend Political Boundaries*

What is a Reinvention Lab?

*The National Performance Review library says,
"Reinvention Laboratories are innovative organizations
or activities that are established to test or prototype new
"reinventing government" initiatives. The reinvention
laboratories are empowered to begin experimenting with
radical new ways of doing business, and share their ideas,
successes and lessons across government."*

2. **Develop the Escalante Center as a major educational and cultural asset.** The Escalante Center can become a major asset, supporting research that enhances understanding and stewardship of the region, while offering scientific and cultural programs for locals and visitors.

The Escalante Center leverages public and private investments in the community to more effectively address issues of public lands management, economic improvement and community well-being. Offering accredited classes, field camps and research opportunities, the multi-use facilities maximize the potential of the Center, and provide an exceptional resource for students, scientists, artists and historians. The combination of art, history and science with destination development for education and relaxation capitalizes upon the coherence between environmental preservation and traditional uses.

The Escalante Center

Partnerships with other educational institutions, like Northern Arizona University and Dixie College should be channeled through the Escalante Center. This would include for example, the efforts to offer entrepreneurial and vocational training called for in Recommended Action 3.

3. **Establish a regional entrepreneurial and procurement center in Kanab.** This center would serve as a business incubator that provides space, basic services (receptionist, etc.), training, and counseling for start-ups. Workable financing should be made available through a revolving loan fund. This center would also house the facilities, including distance learning facilities, needed to provide vocational training programs in federal procurement and the skills needed for landscape restoration, the tourism industry, and associated enterprises.
4. **Ensure federal participation in the Kanab government center.** Direct existing community development program funds (CDBG, Utah CIB, etc.) to offer further assistance to this project. The City of Kanab has a remarkably appropriate, city-center site for a new government center that could include city and federal offices, such as national monument headquarters; the local tourism promotion office; and basic visitor services (pay phones, restrooms, etc.). This site could also include an innovative marketing forum, much like a farmer's market, but for guides, outfitters, and other eco-tourism services. A government center in Fredonia is also desirable, and should be considered in developing the capital improvements program called for in Recommended Action 6.
5. **Make affordable maintenance of existing roads possible.** The only realistically affordable sources of aggregate for road maintenance in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument are within the Monument. This fact was not recognized in the presidential proclamation establishing the Monument. A correction allowing for use of existing aggregate sources to maintain established roads (roads specifically named in local agreements with the BLM) is needed.

6. **Help build basic infrastructure capacity through the NRL.** Workshop participants identified several infrastructure priorities, including water and sewer system improvements or Fredonia, multiple-purpose buildings in smaller communities like Big Water, trails, fiber optic service, and road improvements. A regional capital improvements program is needed. Providing some capital funding would speed construction of facilities — many of which are long-time local priorities — needed to accommodate visitors.

A Unique Opportunity

Public lands policy has been a source of strife in Garfield and Kane Counties, and the Arizona Strip, for years. Implementing these six recommendations will not end the controversy. It will create an opportunity to show how local needs can be respected, and local people productively involved, in public lands decisions.

Workshop Participants

Alvey, Karen	Kanab City
Babbitt, Paul	Coconino County
Barlow, Oliver	Colorado City
Brinkerhoff, Carol	Utah Travel Council
Cannon, Kate	BLM
Carroll, Norm	Kane County
Casebolt, Donna	Kane County
Crane, Michael	Governor's OPB
Curtis, Wes	Governor's Rural Partnership
Dowd, Maggie	North Kaibab
Falvey, Don	Zion National Park
Gentle, Michael	Kane County
Goodale, Bill	Mohave County
Hiscock, John	Pipe Spring National Monument
Holt, Jeannine	Senator Hatch
Hugie, Robert	Five County AOG
Jordon, Joy	Fredonia
Judd, Joe	Kane County
Kimble, Thomas	Big Water
King, Gary	Big Water
Leonard, Jill	North Kaibab
Magner, Jim	Magner & Assoc.
Matson, Jim	Kanab
McAllister, Keith	Kanab City
Meredith, Jerry	BLM
Nielson, Hal	USDA - Rural Development
Ramsay, Shayne	UDOT - Kanab
Richeson, Bruce	Senator Robert Bennett
Sacher, Maggie	Vermillion Cliffs
Siler, Gene	Tropic
Sizemore, Kenneth	Five County Association of Governments
Steed, Stephen	Escalante
Wilson, Ron	Dixie National Forest
Winters, Suzanne	Escalante Center
Wright, Tony	Kanab City

The Sonoran Institute is a leading proponent of community stewardship, an approach to conservation based on inclusive and collaborative strategies for enhancing both conservation opportunities and local quality of life. The Institute works primarily in Western North America, from Alaska through the Canadian and U.S. Rocky Mountains and south to the arid lands of northwestern Mexico. The Sonoran Institute is a non-profit conservation organization headquartered in Tucson, Arizona, with a Northwest office in Bozeman, Montana.

To learn more about community stewardship, we invite you to visit the Community Stewardship Exchange Web site (www.sonoran.org). The site is designed as a resource for the people working to preserve the values that make their communities unique and attractive - citizens, public land managers, ranchers, local officials, and environmental advocates. It includes information about communities that are protecting natural landscapes and local values while improving economic conditions, as well as contact information for individuals and organizations active in this area.

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